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Ludovic Ruat

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EXAMINER

DSOUZA, JOSEPH FRANCIS A

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ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 7/2/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

a) Argument: Applicant argued that in his invention: “ since the first state machine is configured to detect the break character within the header, it ensures a complete detection of the frame header before activating the second state machine for detecting the standard characters (when in the second operating mode)” (Remarks 7/2/2008, page 11, last full paragraph) whereas in Hong " there is the potential that the break character detection unit 198 begins operation before the standard character processing unit 202 detects a frame header” (Remarks 7/2/2008, page 12, 1st 4 lines).

Response: In Applicant's method, the second state machine is activated after the break characters are detected (see Specification [0033], last 4 lines). In Hong's Fig. 22, the break characters are clearly detected first in block 198 before the block 202 starts. Therefore, Examiner respectfully disagrees with Applicant's argument.

b) Argument: Applicant argued that having separate state machines allows different operating modes to be supported (Remarks 7/2/2008, page 12, middle paragraph)

Response: This would be true in Hong's system as well. If the state machines were separated then the same advantage would be available.

- c) Argument: Applicant argued that Examiner is using a three-way rejection and that Gulick discloses an asynchronous frame receiver (Remarks 7/2/2008, page 12, last 5 lines) but Sexton fails to disclose that the controllers are operating as asynchronous frame receivers (Remarks 7/2/2008, page 13, 2nd last paragraph)

Response: Examiner respectfully disagrees. Firstly, Sexton is being used to disclose the header comprising a break character with a data bit length greater than a data bit length of the standard characters (CTFR 5/2/2008, page 4, last 2 paragraphs). One of ordinary skill in the art can easily use such a feature in either a synchronous or an asynchronous system. Secondly, though Sexton does not explicitly use the words “synchronous” or “asynchronous”, it is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that the mode described in Sexton (column 2, lines 3 - 31), that the mode is asynchronous since the slave PLCs have to monitor for a break character and because the length of the message is transmitted, implying variable length messages.

OOO